

Letham Playgroup Day Care of Children

1st Dunnichen Scout Hut
Duncan Road
Letham
Forfar
DD8 2PN

Telephone: 07896 925617

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

27 August 2019

Service provided by:

Letham Playgroup

Service provider number:

SP2003000573

Service no:

CS2003002879

About the service

Letham Playgroup registered with the Care Commission in 2002 and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate in 2011. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children at any one time, aged 27 months to 5 years.

The playgroup operates from the local scout hall. Children have direct access to an outdoor play area, and have regular outings within the local community. The playgroup is run by a voluntary committee.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

Children were observed to be confident and comfortable in their surroundings. They had established strong, positive relationships with staff. Children were familiar with resources and routines of the playgroup. Children were happy to chat to inspectors throughout the inspection, comments included:

'That's a cookie.'

'Here's some strawberry juice.'

'Have a seat, we're making pizza.'

'Let's mix it!'

'I put suncream on my legs.'

'I've found it, it's sparkly!'

Two parent and carer questionnaires were received prior to carrying out the inspection, and we spoke to two parents during the inspection, who reported a very high level of satisfaction with the care their child receives. In particular, comment was made as to the positive relationships with staff, and the impact of the new manager on the quality of the provision.

Self assessment

The service was not asked to submit a self assessment prior to inspection. We reviewed their quality assurance systems and improvement plans. Further details can be found under the quality of management and leadership.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Children were welcomed into a service which provided a warm, nurturing and respectful ethos. Children were happy with their friends, and clearly led on their own choices and play throughout the session. Discussion took place with children as to what they might like to play with, and those quieter children were supported at their own pace, respecting their choice not to always participate in the larger group activities.

Children's independence and responsibility was strongly promoted within the setting. Displays were at child height, which gave them good ownership, and promoted their learning and engagement with topics such as family trees and learning about the wellbeing indicators. Children were observed to be extremely kind and caring to their peers, with this respectful behaviour role modelled consistently by staff.

Responsive and child led care was evident throughout sessions, and staff shared with us their floorbooks, planning and journaling in line with this. We had a lengthy discussion with staff around this as it was still relatively newly developed. Positive foundations were in place for this, with the thread of learning and interests being evident across the documentation, environment and children's activities. We discussed the further embedding of this across the service.

The service had a very good presence within the local community, and this was supported with links and visits to and from other settings. The manager had recently introduced a 'walking bus' for children attending the local nursery after playgroup. Parents commented very positively on this in relation to supporting their child's transition to the nursery.

Children's information was in place and reviewed regularly. The staff team had a very good understanding of supporting children with allergy and medication requirements, providing parents with information and guidance as necessary.

The manager and staff team had recently updated their child protection training, and had a very good understanding of their role in safeguarding children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as very good.

The playgroup was based within the scout hall, with access to the outdoor play area. Children were supported to access toilets off the main hall area. A secure entrance was in place contributing to children's safety.

The environment had improved greatly since last inspection, providing a much more engaging and stimulating environment for children. An extensive variety of resources were laid out for children including loose parts, creation stations, home corners, art areas and a softer, relaxing story corner. The layout of these supported children's choice and independence very well.

All resources within each area were accessible at child height, including instructions for how to make items such as playdough. This contributed very positively to children's independence, responsibility and choice. Staff facilitated children's learning extremely well, recognising when they required some input and when to step back.

Children helped prepare snack and were very familiar with the rhythm and routine of this time of the day. A small hand washing sink nearby snack was used consistently by all children, demonstrating a very good awareness of infection control and hand hygiene. Children were seen to take great pride in helping prepare snack, and helping themselves to crockery and a drink. Friends who were struggling were offered a helping hand by those children who were more confident, providing a caring and nurturing environment for all.

Outdoors children had access to a large play space, which provided numerous loose parts and natural resources for creative and imaginative play. The manager and staff shared with us their plans to further develop this, increasing the natural resources on offer. There was a positive approach to risk benefit for children, and we observed several examples of children problem solving and supporting each other to decide how to climb and explore safely. Again staff were observed to facilitate this appropriately, allowing the children the space and time to embed their own thinking and problem solving.

Accidents and incidents were recorded and shared with parents. Risk assessments were in place, and continuously reviewed as necessary.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Staff reported a very good level of support and induction from the manager. All staff had re-visited induction procedures to ensure these were robust and meaningful. Staff were recruited following best practice guidance, and were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Some staff were working towards relevant qualifications.

Staff, including the manager, received appraisals with clear training and development objectives identified from this. This contributed positively to their practice and overall continuous professional development. We found the staff to be reflective practitioners who consistently reviewed the child's experience and identified where this could be improved. Reflective accounts were kept of staff training, and a new format was being developed which would allow for deeper reflection on the impact of training on staff practice.

Staff were feeling more settled within their roles, and they told us they now felt more confident as a result of the consistent support from the manager. Regular informal meetings and discussions amongst the team contributed towards a very good level of teamwork, impacting positively on children's experience overall. All staff felt included in every aspect of the playgroup, and this was evident in the welcoming, respectful and nurturing environment they provided to children. We discussed the benefit of having formal team meetings, with records kept of discussions and action points.

Very strong relationships were evident between staff, children and parents. Parents we spoke to highlighted the strong relationships with staff, and the positive impact this had on their child's experience. Staff were observed to engage in a consistent, respectful manner with children, naturally extending their learning through discussion and exploration of ideas. This contributed to the strong child-led ethos of the setting.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as good, whilst recognising elements of very good practice.

The playgroup had undergone changes to management since the last inspection, and this was found to have had a very positive impact on the service. The manager had a clear overview of all aspects of the service, and had worked hard to implement improvements, providing strong leadership to the staff team. The manager reported a good level of support from the committee and a shared vision for the ongoing development of the service. Feedback from the committee, local authority and parents all commented very positively on the management of the service.

Given the strong leadership provided by the manager, we discussed the leadership roles and responsibilities for the staff team. We highlighted the benefits of playing to individual strengths within the team, as well as the opportunity for staff to develop their skills in leadership.

A quality assurance system was in place, which was used to evaluate current progress and reflect on areas for improvement. This contributed positively to the overview of the service, and was inclusive of the whole staff team. We discussed the introduction of challenge questions to this which would further strengthen the quality assurance of the service, evaluating this more clearly against the How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare framework.

There was an improvement plan in place which clearly identified the service priorities for improvement. These identified priorities were in line with our observations on inspection, demonstrating the good level of self-awareness and reflection from the manager and staff team.

Playgroup policies and procedures were in place, and were currently under review by the manager and committee. We discussed these, and highlighted further areas for development with regard to certain content. We also highlighted the Care Inspectorate Hub and links to best practice guidance.

We discussed the changes to the playgroup, and the benefit to reviewing the aims and objectives to ensure these reflected the current service, including parents and children in this.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

In order to ensure staff are appropriately skilled to carry out their roles, the committee must ensure staff receive regular training and a robust induction into the service. The staff training should be audited to measure its effectiveness in developing practice and improving outcomes for children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This is to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210) Regulation 15 (b) (i) – Staffing.

Timescale: by 30 September 2018.

This requirement was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

The new manager had implemented a robust induction for all staff. A variety of training had been attended by the staff team, with reflection records in place regarding the impact of this in their practice.

Met – within timescales

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

In order to accurately track children's progress, the service should ensure that children's learning folders are kept up to date and reflect the individuality of the child.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me'. (HSCS 1.27).

This recommendation was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had implemented a new system for tracking children's progress which was found to be working well.

Recommendation 2

In order to meet children's individual care needs, the manager must ensure that medication paperwork is completed fully, reviewing this regularly in line with best practice guidance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'. (HSCS 1.15).

This recommendation was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The manager demonstrated a very good understanding of managing children's medication and allergies.

Recommendation 3

To improve outcomes for children, the committee should ensure that all staff, including the manager, receive regular formal supervision to support staff, allowing them time to reflect and develop their practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This recommendation was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The manager and the staff had all received an appraisal which had identified training needs in line with their professional development.

Recommendation 4

In order to improve outcomes for children, the committee and manager must ensure the manager is supported to implement a consistent and robust quality assurance system, reflecting the priorities of the service improvement plan.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed.' (HSCS 4.23).

This recommendation was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The manager had implemented a quality assurance system, with plans to develop this further. The service improvement plan reflected the current priorities within the service.

Recommendation 5

In order to more clearly represent the child's voice, the service should consider ways to increase opportunities for children to share their views and opinions.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'My views will always be sought and my choices respected, including when I have reduced capacity to fully make my own decisions.' (HSCS 2.11).

This recommendation was made on 17 August 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

New systems were in place within the service to effectively capture the child's voice, providing regular and consistent opportunities for children to share their views and opinions.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
13 Jun 2018	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
17 May 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
30 May 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
21 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
29 Mar 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
4 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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